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Rural District of Louth

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

The Year 1954

T. E. WIGGEN AND SON, LTD.
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Louth Rural District Council

1954—5

Chairman of the Council :

Councillor R. E. West

Vice-Chairman of the Council :

Councillor F. FOWLER

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS COMMITTEE.

Chairman :

Councillor A. E. Davy

Vice-Chairman :

Councillor J. H. V. White

Councillor J. T. Baumber

Councillor C. H. Benton

Councillor F. Coleman

Councillor F. Coxon

Councillor C. A. Daulton

Councillor H. J. Farrow

Councillor Miss E. H. Farnsworth

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Councillor C. Gillot

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Councillor Mrs. A. Stone

Councillor N. B. Stovin

Councillor Mrs. C. V. Stubbs

Councillor J. W. Stubbs

Councillor A. Todd

Councillor G. E. Towler

Councillor D. R. Webb

Councillor R. E. West

Councillor M. R. Wilkinson

Councillor Mrs. M. J. Horrabin

To the Chairman and Members of the Louth Rural District Council.

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the health and sanitary circumstances of the district for 1954.

This, like 1952, was a year when all the indices, by which the health and welfare of a community are assessed, were individually better than those for the country as a whole. The relationship of live births to deaths, at 312 to 215, gave no concern about the "replacement level," while still births and infant deaths, which tend to have year to year variation in a small population, were both very low in the national and local senses.

The death rate was fractionally higher than last year, but the extra number of deaths in the aged groups accounted for this. It is interesting to observe that 35% of the total deaths occurred at the ages 80 years and over, and the figure was 72% for the ages over 65 years. In these circumstances, it was not surprising to find vascular lesions of the nervous system and coronary disease affecting the highest mortality toll, though deaths due to malignant growths remained at the level of previous years.

The infectious disease tables call for no comment other than the mention of the general outbreak of whooping cough, which had a greater incidence than suggested by the number of notifications received. This scourge of childhood should be a rare, or at least an insignificant, infection within a decade if parents would wake up to their responsibilities. The recent experience of the disease on a large scale may serve as a fillip for immunisation, or will it mean a period of return to complacency? In the immunisation against diphtheria, we are no more than "holding our own." The full-blooded objector is rare, but the good intention is so often unnecessarily and vexaciously delayed.

The environmental services, which are so intimately concerned with the health and general welfare of the community, usually gain the limelight only when new schemes are afoot or by the progression of existing ones. The Council has every reason to take pride in the achievement of making a pure water supply available in 51 out of the 79 parishes since the end of the war, to which the work during the year contributed its active quota. One can only express disappointment that, for reasons outside the Council's control, the scheme of sewer laying gave little promise of improvement, especially in the Marsh areas where the need for it is more insistent.

Housing conditions rank first among environmental factors influencing health, and the yearly efforts towards improving the community housing resulted in a satisfactory number of new

buildings being completed, together with the active attention given to raise the standard of lower category properties through the medium of the Housing Act 1949 provisions. The encouragement given by the Council, and its officials, to property owners to avail of the facilities offered by the provisions of this Act, produced a gratifying response, which made the number of cases dealt with the highest in the county.

The obligation to secure, as far as possible, clean and safe food supplies for the community poses a varied problem in supervision, the ramifications of which extend from rat control to dish washing. During the year, the decontrol of meat saw the return to use of the private slaughter houses for which licenses were approved, and for the first time in the district, the duties of meat inspection became the responsibility of the sanitary department. Attention, as far as possible, was given to the supervision of matters coming under the food heading, though this was not in all cases as complete as would be desired owing to force of circumstances.

In a busy and successful year's working, it is a great pleasure to express my gratitude to Mr. Shone and his staff for their loyal and willing assistance accorded me at all times. In the production of this report, I have been indebted to Mr. Shone for supplying exhaustive details of the work in his department, of which I have made free use. I gladly avail also of the privilege of recording my earnest thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, for the continued help and courtesy which encouraged the efforts of all of us in the department.

W. J. KERRIGAN,

Medical Officer of Health

Louth; August 1955.

LOUTH RURAL DISTRICT

Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions for the Year 1954.

Public Health Officers :

Medical Officer of Health :

W. J. KERRIGAN, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., L.M., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor :

S. SHONE, A.R. San. I.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector and Asst. Surveyor :

P. CHILDS, A.R. San I.

Additional Sanitary Inspectors :

D.St. John FROST, A.R., San.I.

C. WILDING, A.R. San.I.

SECTION A

Social Conditions and General Statistics.

Area of Rural District in Acres	...	...	153,129
Registrar General's estimate of Resident Population			18,480
Density of population per acre	...	...	0.12
Number of Inhabited Houses at end of 1954	...	...	5,493
Rateable Value of Inhabited Houses	...	...	£35,124
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	£254

VITAL STATISTICS.

(Note—Figures in brackets show corresponding rates for
England and Wales).

Births

(a)	LIVE		Total	Male	Female
	Legitimate	...	300	156	144
	Illegitimate	...	12	3	9
			-----	-----	-----
			312	159	153
			-----	-----	-----
(b)	STILL				
	Legitimate		5	3	2
	Illegitimate		—	—	—
			-----	-----	-----
			5	3	2
			-----	-----	-----

Live birth rate per 1,000 of estimated population	16.9
Standardised birth Rate adjusted by comparability factor 1.15	19.4 (15.2)
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated population	0.27 (0.36)
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 of Live and Still Births	15.8 (24.0)

Deaths	Total	Male	Female
	215	114	101
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population	11.63		
Standardised Death Rate adjusted by comparability factor 0.86	10.0	(11 3)	
Deaths from maternal causes	NIL		
Deaths of Infants under one year :			
	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	5	3	2
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Death Rate per 1,000 live births	16.02	(25.5)	
Deaths of Infants under one month :			
	Total	Male	Female
	4	2	2
Causes of deaths in children under one year and ages :			
	Male	Female	
Atelectasis and Prematurity		2 days	
Prematurity	1 hour	3 days	
Pneumonia and Gastro Enteritis	1 month		
Erythroblastosis Foetalis	5 hours		

Ages at Death.

Ages in Years	0/1	1/5	5/15	15/25	25/35	35/45	45/55	55/65	65/75	75/80	80+	Total
Deaths	5	—	—	5	4	4	14	28	49	31	75	215

Deaths from Malignant Tumours

Ages in Years	Under 40	40/45	45/50	50/55	55/60	60/65	65/70	70/75	75/80	80+	Total
Cases	2	—	3	1	—	8	6	3	3	6	32

Malignant Tumour Sites

	Cases	Males	Females
Stomach	3	2	1
Lung, bronchus	6	4	2
Breast	2	—	2
Uterus	2	—	2
Other sites	19	12	7
	—	—	—
	32	18	14
	—	—	—

Causes of Death

	Males	Females
1. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	3	—
2. Tuberculosis—non respiratory ...	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease ...	1	—
4. Malignant neoplasm—Stomach ...	2	1
5. Malignant neoplasm—Lung, Bronchus	4	2
6. Malignant neoplasm—Breast ...	—	2
7. Malignant neoplasm—Uterus	—	2
8. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	12	7
9. Leukaemia—aleukaemia ...	—	1
10. Diabetes ...	1	—
11. Vascular Lesions of nervous system	13	21
12. Coronary disease, angina ...	24	10
13. Hypertension with heart disease	1	2
14. Other heart disease ...	12	19
15. Other circulatory disease ...	2	9
16. Influenza ...	1	—
17. Pneumonia ...	1	7
18. Bronchitis ...	4	1
19. Other diseases of respiratory system	1	—
20. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	—
21. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	—
22. Nephritis and nephrosis ...	1	1
23. Hyperplasia of prostate ...	6	—
24. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ...	—	—
25. Congenital malformations ...	—	—
26. Other defined and ill defined diseases	13	15
27. Motor vehicle accidents ...	—	—
28. All other accidents ...	9	1
29. Suicide ...	1	—
	—	—
	114	101
	—	—

SECTION B

Prevalence of and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

Infectious Diseases other than Tuberculosis notified during 1954 including Service cases.

Disease	Cases Notified	Case rates per 1,000 of estimated population	
Whooping Cough	124	6.71	(2.4)
Measles	3	0.16	(3.3)
Pneumonia	18	0.97	(0.6)
Scarlet Fever		0.05	(0.09)
Acute Poliomyelitis :	1		
(Paralytic)	—	—	(0.03)
(Non-Paralytic)	1	0.05	(0.01)
Erysipelas	1	0.05	(0.09)
Para-Typhoid	1	0.05	(0.01)
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	*9.46	(18.16)
Dysentery	2	0.1	(0.7)
Total	154	(* per 1,000 Total Live and Still Births)	

Excluding the whooping cough cases, the numbers referable to other infections were few, though showing variety. Whooping cough cases began in February and persisted until November in the spread through the various parishes, though the peak period was at mid year. One third of the children affected were under school age but, fortunately, there were no fatalities arising from the complications of the disease.

We again had a case of paratyphoid B, of similar phage type (Taunton) as the single household cases of the previous year, though one could trace no direct connexion between the households, who lived at opposite ends of the district. In the household of the affected child, three others were found to be excretors of the causative organism and were also admitted to the Isolation hospital until non-infective. In the course of investigation, the trail led to a general hospital where a very complete examination of the kitchen workers, staff, and the sewer system led to negative results. I wish to express my gratitude to the hospital staff for the excellent co-operation given in the course of this investigation.

Eight of the primary pneumonia cases occurred in children.

Diphtheria, Whooping Cough Immunisation and Vaccination against Smallpox.

I am indebted to Dr. Campbell O.B.E., County Medical Officer of Health, for the following information about immunisation and vaccination treatments carried out in the area during 1954.

(a) **Diphtheria Immunisation.**

Under 5 Years	5-14 years	Booster Doses
174 (204)	74 (68)	209 (217)

(b) **Anti Smallpox.**

Ages in years	0/1	1/4	5/14	15+	Total
(a) Primary Vaccinations	66 (60)	11 (14)	9 (11)	11 (20)	97 (105)
(b) Re-vaccinations	— (—)	1 (1)	5 (4)	16 (11)	22 (16)

(c) **Whooping Cough.** (Under five years)

Under One	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
22 (15)	21 (20)	3 (6)	3 (3)	5 (2)	54 (46)

(d) **Combined Diphtheria & Whooping Cough Immunisations**
(Under five years)

Under one	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
1 (—)	2 (—)	— (—)	1 (—)	— (—)	4 (—)

Prophylaxis against infectious diseases.

Diphtheria.

A decrease, compared with the previous year, has unfortunately to be reported in the number immunised in the under five year old group, but when measured as a percentage of the district births of the previous year it showed 58%, which was 8% better than the average over the previous five year period by similar computation. One notes the evidence of procrastination rather than objection by the relatively large numbers, both of booster and primary cases, dealt with at school ages; and although the better late than never philosophy must apply, it is regrettable to observe that 30% of the initial immunisations done during the year were postponements until the children started school.

Whooping Cough.

The response to prophylactic measures against whooping cough were far from impressive, even allowing for the fact that this was only the second year since free facilities for treatment were provided by the County Council at clinics and by general practitioners, and that moreover, no efforts were made to push the scheme. The local response, however, fell far short of other rural districts in the County, which may have been, in part, due to the severe outbreaks of the disease in the area, because it is then usually too late to avert infection by immunisation.

The experience of the whooping cough outbreaks over the past two years will surely have brought home to parents the need for seeking protection against, what is regarded as, the most serious infectious disease to which the child population is now exposed. The follow up results of immunised children, published in the Report of our County Medical Officer of Health, confirm those published by other sources from time to time, which broadly claim about 70% total protection for the immunised whose resistance is maintained by booster injections, and marked mitigation of symptoms in the case of the remainder who later contract the disease.

Tuberculosis: New Cases and Mortality during 1954

Age period (years)	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1								
5			1					
15		2						
25	1							
35		2		1				
45	1	1			1			
55								
65+					2			
Totals	2	5	1	1	3	—	—	—

SECTION C

General Provisions of Health Services of the Area.

Laboratory Facilities.

We were indebted, as usual, to the excellent service provided by the Public Health Laboratory at Lincoln, in charge of Dr. J. M. Croll, for the examination of 681 samples comprising water, milk and ice cream. 76 additional milk samples were subjected to biological examination and 74 specimens, in connexion with infectious disease investigation, were given the appropriate examination.

Clinics and Welfare Centres.

Centre	Date and Time	Doctor attends
Binbrook	Weekly, Tuesday 2-30—4-30 p.m.	1st and 3rd Tuesdays
North Somercotes	Weekly, Friday 10 a.m.—12 (noon)	1st and 3rd Tuesdays
Tetney	2nd & 4th Fridays 2—4 p.m.	2nd Friday
Holton-le-Clay	2nd & 4th. Wednesdays 10 a.m.—12 (noon)	2nd & 4th Wednesdays

An additional welfare centre was about to be opened at Manby for the convenience of the mothers and children living at the married quarters of the R.A.F. Station.

The attendances at the centres within the district are quoted below, through the courtesy of the County Medical Officer of Health.

Centre	No. of Sessions	Total Attendance
Binbrook	51	1457
North Somercotes	52	1128
Tetney	24	381
Holton-le-Clay	23	217

SECTION D

Sanitary Circumstances in the area

Water Supply.

The work of main laying went forward with the usual vigour, to result at the end of the year in main supplies being available in 51 of the 79 parishes of the district, which meant that since the end of the war, 116 miles of main were completed with the necessary headworks and reservoirs. During the year, construction work was completed at the Kenwick and Wyham reservoirs and nearing completion at the Fulstow pumping station. In addition, the 12" main from Kenwick to Manby was in service, while the villages of Little Cawthorpe, Legbourne, Belleau, Authorpe and Little and Great Carlton had been linked to the main supply, which was part of the regional scheme for connecting up with the Mablethorpe and Sutton distribution.

The contract for the laying of distribution mains in the villages of North and South Somercotes from the trunk system supplying Saltfleet was in early operation.

Regular bacteriological sampling of the water from the various public supplies, taken from the bores and distribution points over the district, was carried out, usually at fortnightly intervals, and out of the 280 samples examined, 9 only called for follow-up investigation. Rather different, was the experience of the privately sponsored piped supplies, though they caused less trouble than usual. The Hainton privately operated supply caused no trouble, but the Withcall and Welton sources demanded the accustomed supervision on our part to check the rather casual attention given to chlorination treatment. Four of the 27 samples taken from the Withcall supply were found polluted, as were seven of 21 samples from the Welton source, which resulted from defects in the chlorinating apparatus.

In the course of investigation of private bores and wells from individual houses over the district, 60 samples were examined.

Quarterly chemical analysis, totalling 21, were done of the district public supplies, all of which gave satisfactory results.

Drainage and Sewage.

The chief sanitary inspector gave details about the following matters concerning the work of the year :—

Closets.

Number of conversions to water carriage system	74
Repairs to closets	10
Repairs to water closets	41
Number of houses with privy vaults at end of year	813
Number of houses with pail closets at end of year	2632
Number of houses with water closets at end of year	2316

Drains.

Examined, tested, exposed etc. ...	113
Unstopped, repaired etc. ...	21

Sewers and Sewerage Disposal Works.

The surveyor reported the laying of 9" sewer in the villages of Holton-le-Clay, Tetney and North Somercotes where 415, 1050 and 530 yards respectively had been completed, while progress on the Holton-le-Clay and Tetney disposal works brought them near completion point, with a start made at the North Thoresby works. The restricted schemes in these villages were authorised only to service the new Council house buildings, but the Ministry subsequently agreed to the inclusion of connections for other dwellings along the sewer routes. Permission has now been requested to extend the sewers in the three villages so as to bring sufficient properties into the disposal works to ensure them operating at capacity.

It is disappointing to think that the comprehensive scheme for the sewerage of these large Marsh villages may have to be postponed to an unknown date, in view of the fact that the previously existing pollution of the water courses over the whole Marsh area has now become very much aggravated by the extensions of the water services. The problem is intensified here by the small volume of water in the dykes, which does not allow anything like an adequate dilution of the sewage entering; and by sewage, one includes the ordinary waste water from households, which can create conditions in the courses as offensive as that caused by the cruder forms of deposit. The part solution of the sewage problem in these villages will continue to provide us with justifiable complaints about the polluted condition of the surrounding water courses.

At the established disposal works at Binbrook, eight additional sludge beds, together with the necessary pumping and drainage provisions, were reported as being virtually completed.

Three samples of effluent from each of the Binbrook, Ludford and Manby works were chemically analysed and reported as complying with accepted standards.

Refuse collection.

The fortnightly collection from 69 parishes, in addition to the weekly service given at the R.A.F. Flying College, Manby, was maintained. No further parishes were included during the year, and the service now operates to practical limits on account of the extra houses that continue to be included in the original undertaking. The disposal of the refuse is done entirely by controlled tipping at the six conveniently chosen Council sites. There were no serious complaints during the year about the collection service, nor was there any trouble at the tipping grounds.

Disinfection.

Rooms disinfected.

(a) Ordinary Infectious Disease	...	...	3
(b) Tuberculosis	...	...	1
Rooms stripped and cleansed	...	...	Nil
Number of premises disinfested	...	...	7

Nuisances.

Total number of nuisances during year :—

(a) Abated as a result of informal action by Sanitary Inspector	...	...	98
(b) Reported to Council :			
(1) Statutory Notice issued	...	...	2
(2) Statutory Notice not issued	...	...	Nil

Knackers Yards.

Number Licensed	...	...	...	6
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	15
Defects remedied	...	...	...	3

Rats and Mice Destruction.

The control of rodent infestation has become a major issue in the scheme of disease prevention since more attention has been focussed on the incidence of disease caused, directly or indirectly, by these pests. From this perspective, it is gratifying to observe in the monthly reports submitted by the chief sanitary inspector to the Public Health Committee the success of the rodent operator's valuable work.

During the year, it was reported that 314 premises were surveyed and 192 treated, to effect an estimated kill of some 24,000 rats. Apart from the treatment of properties following on complaints, regular systematic surveys were carried out, and close liaison was observed with the County Pests Officer who was responsible for dealing with infestation on farms. The Council treated all private premises free of charge, though recovering 50% of the overall charge from the responsible Ministry, but charged an hourly rate for the services of the operator in dealing with the actual treatment of business or industrial premises.

The sanitary inspector made the observation that surprisingly few complaints of infestation came from the country districts, for the reason that the presence of the rat appears to be passively tolerated as part of the rural scene and the control effected by the domestic dog or cat.

Shops Acts, 1950.

(a) Number of shops inspected	...	...	83
(b) Contraventions remedied	...	...	4

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

1. Inspections.

Premises	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Prosecution
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, are to be enforced by Local Authorities	6	9	—	Nil
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	65	66	—	Nil
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	Nil	Nil	—	Nil
Totals	71	75	—	Nil

2. Defects found.

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Referred to/by H.M. Inspector
Want of Cleanliness	4	4	Nil
Inadequate ventilation	1	1	
Ineffective drainage of floors	2	2	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences : Unsuitable or defective	2	2	Nil
Totals	9	9	Nil

3. Outwork.

Nature of work	No. of outworkers from returns submitted	Contraventions
Making wearing apparel	3	Nil
Totals	3	Nil

SECTION E

Housing

Total number of new Houses erected during the year				66
(1)	By the Council	...	...	37
(2)	By other Local Authorities	..	...	Nil
(3)	By Private Licence	...	...	29
(1) Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—				
(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...		89
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ..		109
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ...		Nil
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...		Nil
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...			Nil
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...			60
(2) Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notices :—				
	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ...			58
(3) Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—				
(a)	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 36 of the Housing Act, 1936			Nil
(b)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—			
	(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...		3
	(2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—		
	(a)	By owners	...	2
	(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	...	1

(c) Proceeding under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—			
(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolitation Orders were made ...		4
(2)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...		1
	Voluntary Demolitions ...		3
(3)	Number of dwelling houses subject to undertakings ...		1
	Voluntary Undertakings ...		4
(d)	Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 ...		Nil
(e)	Proceedings under Sections 25 and 26 ...		Nil
(4) Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.			
(a)	(1) Number of dwelling houses overcrowded at the end of the year ...		Nil
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ...		2
(c)	(1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ...		Nil
	(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases ...		Nil
(d)	Number of houses again overcrowded after being previously relieved ...		Nil
(5) Housing Act, 1949.			
(a)	Number of applications for grants received ...		178
(b)	Number of grants made ...		55
(c)	Number of applications for grants made by Local Authority ...		Nil
(6) Movable Dwellings, Tents, Caravans, etc.			
(a)	Number of Site Licenses ...		3
(b)	Number of individual Licences ...		24
(c)	Number inspected during the year :—		
	(1) Sites ...		14
	(2) Dwellings ...		42
(d)	Number of contraventions remedied ...		5

Housing.

The 37 Council houses completed during the year consisted of 29 with three bedrooms and 8 with two bedrooms, which brought the total of houses built since the war to 303 Council and 125 privately. Thirteen of the year's Council houses were erected at Grimoldby, eight at Tetney, and the remainder were distributed at Tathwell, Burwell, Welton-le-Wold, Burgh-on-Bain and Donington-on-Bain. An experiment was made at Binbrook by the start made on the erection of four " Grid-Form " bungalows,

in the hope that the cost might encourage their more widespread use.

The number of dwellings inspected for defects was similar to the previous year, and in three cases only had action under statutory powers to be taken to bring about remedy of the defects. Four dwellings were officially represented under Section II as being unfit for human habitation, and three voluntary demolitions were carried out without official representation of the properties. In the 1951 census analysis, it is noticed that our area has the highest percentage of vacant houses among the rural districts of the County, but one wonders how many of these are derelict structures which should be rased.

It is pleasing to note the popularity of the provisions offered under the Housing Act 1949 by the number of applications made for improvement grants during the year. Applications were received in respect of 63 properties, 61 of which were approved at the cost of works of £21,000 odd, and for which 50% grant aid was agreed. In the year, 22 schemes were completed. There have now been about 100 cases approved since the Act came into operation, and a total amount of over £20,000 has been approved for grants payment on completion of the improvement schemes.

The Council has given every encouragement to property owners to avail of the benefits offered by the Act to improve their properties and thus arrest the drift of the lower category houses into the demolition class. The great majority of the applications already dealt with related to farm cottages, of the category 4 type represented in the recent housing survey, but it would be desirable for landlords of village and other private dwellings to enquire to what extent the provisions of the Act might assist them in putting their property into better shape.

SECTION F

Inspection and Supervision of Food

The following list of food premises in the district remains the same as the previous year.

Bakehouses	...	9
Butchers and Porkshops	...	11
Ice Cream dealers	...	67
Fried Fish Shops	...	10
Grocers and Confectioners	...	82
Cafes and Snack Bars	...	4

The chief sanitary inspector reported as follows ;—

“ In 1954, we have effected many improvements, including the installation of refrigerator storage on the premises of two milk distributors and in six shops. The majority of shops are now fitted with satisfactory coverage for cakes and similar

commodities. Mains water has been installed in most premises and every effort continues to be made to effect conversion of closets to the water carriage system, where possible. Altogether, our continual efforts in the education of those concerned with food handling show pleasing results, and instructions given during the visits to premises are concerned with this purpose."

To help the field work, the usual efforts were made by poster displays to call attention to the commoner means by which food is contaminated, and the dangers that can result, but these impersonal methods rate very secondarily to the personal visit. It has to be admitted, however, that in a large scattered district like this, owing to the increasing pressure of work of every type, it is difficult to maintain the regular and systematic supervision of food premises which is desirable, but every effort is being made to ensure that the valuable work in this field will hold its place against the urgencies of other forms of competition.

The following gives details about some of the individual premises.

Slaughter houses.

The biggest event of the year under the food head was the decontrol of meat and live stock from July onward, which put the responsibility on the Council to see that adequate slaughtering facilities were available to meet local requirements at the ending of meat rationing. This involved the examination of slaughter houses in the district, for which applications for licences were made, and the subsequent granting of licences in three cases, after the necessary structural improvements had been carried out to the satisfaction of the Council's officers.

For the first time in the history of the Council, the work of meat inspection became the responsibility of the sanitary inspectors, who held the necessary qualification.

The chief sanitary inspector paid tribute to the excellent co-operation of the owners of the slaughter houses, which allowed 100% inspection of the animals slaughtered. The results of the inspection, and condemnation, of carcasses are given below :—

Unsound Food.
Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excl'ding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	29	21	—	131	49
Number inspected	29	21	—	131	49
(a) All diseases except Tuberculosis					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	1	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	1	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	3	5	—	—	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	10.3	23.1	Nil	Nil	Nil

Butchers' Shops.

Eight of these were licensed for the manufacture of meat products. Seventeen inspections were made and in two cases only were contraventions found, which were remedied.

Bakehouses.

The number remained the same as the previous year. Inspections made, totalled 35, and two contraventions were found. Remedy of defects was carried out in six cases.

Grocery and Confectionery Shops.

Nine contraventions were discovered as the result of 39 visits made to these shops, and eight subsequently received attention. The following foodstuffs were condemned as unfit and disposed of, mainly by burial at the tipping grounds. In the case of meat condemned, attention was given to impregnation with dye before it was disposed of commercially.

Sultanas	...	10 lbs.
Raisins	...	25 lbs.
Currants	...	25 lbs.
Marmalade	...	5 lbs.
Macaroni	...	10 lbs.
Beef suet	...	7 lbs.
Flour	...	3 lbs.

Milk.

The register of distributors, according to my information, comprised the retail of the following types of milk.

Sterilised	35
Pasteurised	22
T.T.	13
Non-designated	30

The figures, of course, do not indicate the amounts sold of any of the above types, since the supplies throughout the district were mainly handled by two large concerns, which distributed, through depots and village shops, sterilised and pasteurised milk bottled at the works. The retail of non-designated milk was limited to the more isolated parts of the district, where cottagers, by choice or necessity, obtained their quota direct from the farm. The number of producer-retailers of the non-designated type was reduced during the year by 10.

In my reports of latter years, I alluded to the negligible number of milk samples being taken, but this year the default was made good, with the results shown below of samples submitted for examination by the methylene blue test, which gives an indication of the hygienic standard. Under the existing dual control, the reports of inferior samples were sent to the County Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, who informed me of the follow-up investigations.

	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Non-designated	36	15
T.T. (Raw)	4	1

Working in conjunction with the County scheme, biological examination was carried out for 76 additional samples. This was concerned with the examination for the presence of tubercle and brucella abortus, and in the case of one positive sample for tubercle and four for brucellosis the necessary action was taken.

Ice Cream.

There were three manufacturers only in the district during the year and 67 premises licensed for sale, both of which figures show decreases from the previous year. The results of the 189 samples examined, confirmed the satisfactory conditions found by the inspectors during their visits. All ten samples of the local

production were satisfactory, and only seven of the pre-packed commodity, supplied by outside sources, fell below expectations, and suitable action was taken about these.

It seems that this section of the food industry has now arrived at that stage of maturity and reliability to require only a minor degree of supervision, although the attention given it in the past was partly concerned with the opportunity the shop visits afforded the inspectors to have a general look round.

	Grades				Total
	1	2	3	4	
Producers ex District	142	30	6	1	179
Producers in District	7	3	—	—	10
Totals	149	33	6	1	189

